

Message Text

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UNCLAS DURBAN 0281

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SF

SUBJ: MANAS BUTHELEZI WINS SUBSTANTIAL LIBEL JUDGMENT

REF: DURBAN A-22; A-17 FEB. 19, 1974; 109 MARCH 29, 1974

1. DR. MANAS BUTHELEZI'S LIBEL SUIT AGAINST DR. JOHN POORTER, EDITOR SOUTH AFRICAN WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE "TO THE POINT" (DURBAN A-17), FINALLY ENDED WITH JUDGMENT OF R13,500 FOR BUTHELEZI. JUDGMENT INCLUDES LEGAL COSTS AND COST OF TRIP BUTHELEZI MADE FROM U.S. TO SOUTH AFRICA TO WITNESS PROCEEDINGS IN APRIL.

2. IN OPINION JUDGE STATED: "A MORE VICIOUS PIECE OF CHARACTER ASSASSINATION WOULD BE HARD TO IMAGINE". EDITORIAL ITSELF INDICATED BUTHELEZI MAN WHO PREACHED CONCILIATION AND COMPASSION, JUDGE SAID, BUT IT THEN WENT ON TO ACCUSE HIM OF HYPOCRISY AND DISHONESTY. JUDGE CLAIMED POORTER FAILED TO OBSERVE EVEN MOST ELEMENTARY PRECAUTIONS IN CHECKING ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY OF SOURCES.

3. COMMENT: JUDGMENT CULMINATION OF LENGTHY LEGAL PROCESS INITIATED IN FEBRUARY 1974 WHILE BUTHELEZI BANNED. AWARD (PLUS COSTS) MORE THAN DOUBLE OUT-OF-COURT SETTLEMENT OFFERED BY POORTER IN MARCH 1974 (DURBAN 109). THOUGH UNCLASSIFIED

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BUTHELEZI WILL NO DOUBT FIND MYRIAD USES FOR MONEY, LEGAL

VICTORY IS PUBLIC AND UNEQUIVOCAL REFUTATION OF POORTER'S
CHARGES ABOUT WHICH BUTHELEZI PRIMARILY CONCERNED.
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Message Attributes

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